

Government Transition Advisory Committee

**Government Transition Advisory Committee
Districts + Council Operations Subcommittee Meeting #7
April 24, 2024, 4:00p.m.
Minutes**

Subcommittee Member Attendance

Name	Present	Absent
Amy Randel	X	
Destiny Magaña-Pablo	X	
Joe Hertzberg	X	
Jose Gamero Cassinelli	X	
Juanita Santana	X	
Juliet Hyams	X	
Lory Hefele	X	
Terry Harris	X	
Zach Kearl	X	

Others Attending

Julia Meier, Transition Team
Katie Gavares, Transition Team
June Reyes, Transition Team
Tate White, Transition team

Welcome

Julia welcomed everyone, provided Zoom logistics, and noted how to provide public comment.

Juliet reviewed the agenda.

Subcommittee Business

Motion to approve the March 28, 2024 meeting summary.

Motion from: Subcommittee Member Santana

Second: Subcommittee Member Gamero Georgeson

Motion passes

Juliet previewed the next co-chair rotation and responsibilities noting that they're hoping to identify chairs within the next two weeks.

Juliet reviewed the group's working agreements.

Government Transition Advisory Committee

Juliet reviewed the timeline from now until final recommendations in mid-September. She noted today the group will revise and vote on the draft recommendations to forward to the GTAC's consideration. Juliet opened the schedule up for questions and there were none.

Jose noted the report on early community engagement was distributed one week ago and posted online. The report will not be presented in the meeting, but time was opened up for questions and reflections:

- Juanita asked about the comment codes under methods – it's referred to as qualitative data. Only part that includes city staff, that means the city staff we see 86% responders in this process of receiving information so I was just wondering why we are including employees in there?
 - Katie: the initial engagement transition team did and some of them were employee briefings which was a very high-level engagement events with a 30minute presentation format. That feedback was very high level and city staff were able to comment on the surveys that were out. We had about 40 city employees, 3 were at the listening session and 37 from the online survey; they are in the first half of the report. And then the later half we included because it was a temperature check on what we got back from the larger staff engagement.
 - Juanita – it gives the impression that all of those comments came from the public and the community in my experience and the comments that I have here from other people. Employees and community feedback should be separate. Feels misleading – concern here.
- Juliet overarching observation is that this topic of in-district offices needs a lot more exploration and matches what we've decided as a subcommittee. We have another crack at it for the summer engagement. She will follow-up with the smaller comments.
- Jose added that we're going to hear a lot of different things from community. Are these engagement numbers for the listening sessions and survey common to other efforts we've had?
 - Julia responded that for such a small engagement period with just 10 days of notice and a few weeks; the survey numbers don't surprise me. Once there was a media article about the survey we saw a bump via earned media. For pretty early, short notice engagement it was okay. On the listening session side, one session would have about 50 people. We got to 50, but it took us three sessions – took more work to get there. Expected with the context we were in.
- Zach's initial reaction to the survey data around the district offices – how few times it was actually brought up. Also, maybe related the fact that there was a majority interest in district engagement. These two things aren't necessarily required together. Happened to be in San Antonio earlier this month and talked

Government Transition Advisory Committee

with community engagement staff within a district office. Their use is less of a convening place as it's a jumping off to do in-district events and activities. The in-district offices for both the use of for a district representative and public is less about a central space to go to and more about being more readily accessible to an in-district event that is not necessarily a city hall activity. Our recommendation whether it is budgeted for or not, aligns to the extent that it gives suggestion that time should be more often spent in-district by the councilors than having a working functioning office that they are doing city business from.

- Juliet agrees that people's concern seem more about logistics of it and more about two-way communication getting some response from their councilors. Hoping in summer greater level of awareness and we'll get more although I thought the responses to the survey were every robust.
- Jose shared that in his experience that he's heard community members assume that they were already happening. To be able to get the council some engagement around these efforts will be helpful for future council members.
- Terry shared that the report itself is useful for measuring engagement and how successful we are in getting the high level types of comments and quantities and demographics. Doesn't substitute for the actual comments themselves, which isn't captured in the report. The report is helpful for some purposes but not for doing the real listening part.
- Destiny likes the report and the example of common themes. There's no proposed actionable improvements or ideas, no way to hold people accountable. How we can take feedback and create something actionable. When will we actually provide recommendations that will affect how people engage with city council and government including details and methods for outreach.
- Joe asked for clarification on Terry's comment about getting the raw comments. Terry mentioned they have been available via listening sessions and they don't show up in the summary report.
 - Lory asked for more information if there's something actionable.
- Jose noted he wished he captured more information.
- Lory shared that in the North Star Civic that the people who participate are typically ones that have a problem. Thinking about how passionate people are relative to one person and being cautious about what we're hearing. Don't know what to do with that but want to be more aware of it.
- Amy was interested that the takeaway matched the Portland Engagement Project – the longer engagement that was done by the office of community and civic life. Wanting more accessibility and wanting clearer channels are pretty much the exact same as in this report. Continuity was interesting.

Draft Recommendations for Future Districts + Council Operations

Government Transition Advisory Committee

Jose opened up the discussion on the draft recommendations starting with Council Districts and Offices asking that subcommittee members focus on proposing revisions, additions or subtractions.

Council Districts and Offices

- Juanita proposed changing “Leave the final decision on the construction of in-district offices to the future city council” – noting that responding to staff question that they prepared a budget for the construction of the buildings; they felt they didn’t have the program – to start to do the engaging and planners – when the new council comes they will be able to make the decisions to do the construction to build, build from scratch buildings for the district offices.
 - Jose clarified that construction also means renovation of a current space and not just building from scratch.
- Juliet wants to see the word “consistent” in a few places – holding “consistent office hours” and regular townhalls; say “consistent” district specific communication channels – would want to have a baseline of every councilor doing a certain amount in a perfect world, but good with just the consistency.
- Lory proposes of using bullet #2 and not #1 because both seem to say similar things.
- Zach would like to have a discussion of the last bullet of whether we should be prescriptive of how districts use city dollars whether it’s offices or maybe it’s to be able to fund more programming with CBOs rather than leasing a building.
- Joe expressed confusion on re-litigating the discussion if GTAC has voted on the four recommendations.
- Terry halfway agreeing with Juanita and Joe, I don’t think we should feel like we can’t make a further recommendation about.
- Jose clarified that we should focus on the engagement stuff we’re adding – they should be engaging outside their offices and having regular office hours so the idea of bringing this forward is around outlining what we hope and recommend what engagement looks like.
- Joe said that it’s good to say we made these recommendations and this is the text of the recommendations and Juanita if we erred it might be too late to change that. And then happy to say that we’re continuing to discuss this and may make further recommendations in the future. I don’t want to change or tweak what we did on the past.

- Bullet 1: Eliminate first bullet and use second one
 - No concerns about this proposal
- Bullet 2: Holding “consistent” office hours and townhalls
 - Discussion about consistent and regularly scheduled or routine – consistent expectations about what the councilors do
 - Terry expressed that this was part of initial concern about doing different things in different ways, but we have to acknowledge that some are going

Government Transition Advisory Committee

to fail at this and that's on them for not doing these things, I don't want our recommendations to sound like a mandate – don't see writing this into any rules

- Jose thinks they should be written into rules; in my opinion, I want them to be expected to hold a certain amount of office hours a week or month and the repercussions are you don't re-elect them
- Destiny on the bullet around specific communication channels – something we've experienced is how disjointed communications is with the city; district offices should come with setting channels with community organizations, local media; expectation that every district be engaged in some way; important to set standards ultimately. Would like to see this language be implemented into the onboarding materials.
- Jose added that channels and consistent – could mean that every single council member doesn't have a different method for putting their public comment to them.
- Joe reminded folks that some will follow the standards and some won't.
- Bullet 3: “Consistent” district-specific communication channels
- Bullet 4, sub-bullet 1: Leave the final decision on “the construction of” in-district offices to the future city council
 - For the sake of time tabled this for the full GTAC meeting
- Bullet 4, final sub-bullet: conversation about offices versus other uses of City funds within districts
 - Zach noted we don't need to re-litigate or decide but we can say that the city should set aside funding for in-district town halls knowing that the low threshold of in-district offices is not temporary and not going to cut it.
- Bullet 4: should we change now or recognize our recommendations could evolve over the summer
 - Destiny question – for these proposals are we trying to get them drafted in time for something. We're trying to get them drafted before budget so they have an idea.
 - Julia clarified that we need by the end of the meeting, the draft recommendations you want to forward to GTAC for their consideration in May. Want to substantively agree to the recommendations.
 - Zach said that recommendation for funds for in-district activities or events – ship has sailed for this budget but we can consider it for a fall BMP. Not so time sensitive – as we continue to do voter education, they might evolve.
 - Amy added that they see their recommendations – like here's our homework about every one of these topics—is that possible? Or is it really we need to make specific recommendations? Folks said that yes it's both – form a plan among ourselves to make meaningful educational

Government Transition Advisory Committee

contributions so you don't have to do the research and here's background information.

- Juliet said leave ourselves to evolve as we can have more flexibility to evolve and ask more pointed questions about in-district offices that I feel we haven't had the opportunity really to get at it yet.
- Juanita – with the understanding that if we're changing some eliminating bullet points cannot see why we cannot do the same thing my recommendation.
 - Destiny clarified that the voting has happened and now we're asking to get more feedback so that the recommendations can evolve.
- Last bullet something we can work on internally
- WE can also make a comment about city funds

Public Input to Council

Juliet opened it up for proposals on the recommendations:

- Joe commented on the first sub bullet – this is something universal to all elected bodies – it's the first item on the agenda because it's not about non-agenda item – it's a courtesy to have that be time certain. Some way to limit the number and time because if you've got 82 people for example, you just can't take the whole council meeting to do that. Impractical to say there should be no limit and should only be at the beginning of the agenda.
- Terry said that he heard people liked the performative comments – other jurisdictions did it in a different way where some had time certain period set aside, but they were at the end of the agenda. Some that regulated the number preregistrations – if you show up, you get to talk. As a provocation, maybe if we air this out in the public to see what people think a bit more directly.
- Juliet called attention to Tate's comment in the chat that the city attorney in the past general communications were not limited and that councilors pay better attention now that it's limited.
 - Juliet added that testimony when she was a city manager, testimony not well controlled because council didn't want to make people bad. People more succinct with limits and when they got long, it gets really expensive.
- Jose shared that we should invest into a public input system – seen cities where all in one place you can click a button and leave written testimony. Would be great if there was investment that made it a lot easier especially keep testimony to given topics and let people stay on the agenda.
- Destiny said the city should prioritize budget and actually engaging the public so it's more successful and efficient. If we get something unified system so that it can be sent to council ahead of time. Sentiments and themes stay current, we as outsiders can make suggestions as we're not employed by the city.

Government Transition Advisory Committee

- Joe says that system goes to the third bullet having a system from cradle to grave.
- Terry is withdrawing #1 and sub-bullet 1
 - Two second bullet point, on agenda items that have gone to committee probably should not be heard again in full council meetings; does this need wordsmithing?
 - Zach acknowledging that we're not going to have the full council at these committee meetings – we should have public comment and input at council committee meetings and agree with Joe saying that when we get through the authorization of policy have it be more the communications timeframe – more somewhat curated, we know there's going to be public comment for specific agenda items like current city items. It's important we keep the full council meetings more structured and not completely out of control with the budget listening session with getting to the agenda itself; spot on with cost of that. Where to direct bulk of public input. Things of that nature that can be useful for how and when they can provide their input.
 - Terry - It's worth clarifying the distinctions that Zach is talking about. State legislature has committee hearings but then you don't get to talk in front of the whole legislation. That's the model that the council rules need to adopt. Otherwise you have 12 council members asking questions and 12 members speech's after public input.
- Destiny said that grouping full council and council committee meant together is hard because there are going to be other ways they're taking public information like townhalls.

Juliet asked for additions or comments to the changes summarized from discussion:

- Bullet 1: wordsmith to clarify input into policy in committees; somewhat curated or non-agenda-item at full council (consider splitting into two – one about committees and one about full committee meetings)
- First sub-bullet: remove “but move to a later spot and not limit the number”
- Bullet 3: Add that the City invest in unified public input system

Council Committee Structure and Procedures

Jose asked for changes and comments on the draft proposals:

- Joe said that wordsmithing things to send to Julia – substantive things is that the thing about standing council committees where we recommend there be six of them with the possibility of adding community engagement or four disciplines – government performance and finance should include nominations – what does this mean? Under CE and/or the 4 disciplines except maybe not sustainability because it's got a committee on its own. The thing about staffing only supporting four council committees – if we think it's six we should say there should be

Government Transition Advisory Committee

enough staffing for six. The committee composition doesn't work if there are only four committees. Pull it all together for why there should be six committees that should be fully staffed and resourced

- Zach shared doesn't feel good about six standing committees plus committee of the whole. Heard this from community engagement, curious if there are thoughts about incorporating that into government performance and finance or if that overwhelms that committee. Six + 1 – ensures that for every councilor there's only one co-chair. If we do more than that it wouldn't be fair given they only have one staff member on their team. Grouping community engagement into the fold and fit it into a different bucket.
- Amy Randel said Portland should use a common legislative model to first bullet point. Agree with Zach about number of committees especially given staffing levels. Instead of should have, could include the following or put that these are committees are common. Hesitation about the committee composition based on rules for representation with the geography – adds another layer administrative stuff with already limited amount of administrative capacity.
- Jose asked for the committee of the whole, if it's missing a slot anyway there wouldn't be enough for everyone.
- Terry said that the committee of the whole with a chair and vice chair, typically council president and vice president how it usually works. Agree with Zach on six committees – worth the administrative wrangling to get the districts and chairs and vice chairs but it's not an impossible puzzle. Nominations is something that I wanted included – City admin Is going to need a confirmation hearing – in looking at boards and commissions and appointments – think it's worth running those names through a committee and getting approvals there— it's common in other jurisdictions. Probably worth an ordinance or confirmation hearings by an ordinance. There could be hearings on that. Once the council realizes the mayor isn't in charge and the mayor can't veto. What we heard about workload balancing – that's important to think about and noticed that the sustainability and climate committee commission is not going to have the same workload as government performance and finance; there maybe be some naming – the workload will be much less than the others.
- Destiny + 1 CE + four disciplines under government performance and finance; should keep that there should be someone from each district in each committee.
 - Jose clarified that this is already in code
- Lory think there's a way to combine bullet points of ensure diverse perspectives and empower marginalized groups
 - Jose shared opinion that they are different to him.
- Julia – was not hearing opposition on proposed changes, wasn't sure about the last one.

Government Transition Advisory Committee

- Joe doesn't agree the four disciplines work doesn't belong in government performance.
- Terry DCAs confirmed in council committee example only doesn't need to be in there
- Jose says six committees should be proposed and not have seven; okay with combining last two bullets and keeps marginalized
- Juanita If CE is included in four disciplines; or are you asking about communications between city council or community.
 - Julia said that yet to determined. I think it's more wholistic as these are new.
 - Juanita said that leave three disciplines as one single piece and put communications on the side. Critical is CE, sustainability, and equity. Is sustainability for whole org for all departments or applies only to CE.
- Joe said that gov performance and finance addresses whole range of issues related to boards and commissions but I wouldn't call it nominations in addition to the nominations. If we need to pare it down to six, I would make CE, comms, inclusion, and sustainability beyond the narrow climate sustainability – seems like a big job and single that out as a committee and tweak the others.
- Destiny said that regularly meetings and that items go to some committees so things don't get bogged down. Standing committees should not aligned to the service areas – asked for clarification.
- Terry withdrew DCA comment

Other Topics

Juliet opened up for other topics and said was responsible for some content based on comments from survey and recent struggles with the cities.

- Joe thinks that 3rd bullet is really important and it's another thing that sort of runs through. Sort of everything else that. The city really ought to have a no wrong door policy that you know, make it really easy to figure out where you should call.
- Terry comment that we had some comments come in about that. And that constituent service or council members is going to be a thing and they're going to need some way to do that internal tracking in their office.
- Lory said emphasizing that centralized tracking system should be able to refer to it
- Julia noted that the standing committees and the four disciplines hearing different opinions
 - Joe said it was important for GTAC to have the discussion on four disciplines; importance of six committees – should the four disciplines be a committee of its own then how do we cut the committees – we can't resolve this now. Worth taking it to GTAC to discuss.

Government Transition Advisory Committee

Recommendations for Future Districts and Council Operations

- Juliet asked for a roll call vote on conceptually the recommendation changes
 - Lory: yes
 - Amy R: yes
 - Destiny: yes
 - Joe: yes
 - Jose: yes
 - Juanita: yes
 - Juliet: yes
 - Terry: yes
 - Zach – not present, left early

Summer Engagement Plan

- Juliet wants to dig more into district offices more and leveraging summer events.
- Juanita asked will there be additional workplan with specific timelines and measurable objectives.

Meeting adjourned, 5:49p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
June Reyes, Transition Engagement Coordinator

Meeting Chat:

15:57:00 From Julia Meier (she/her), staff to Everyone:

brb

16:08:42 From Lory Hefele to Everyone:

Excellent job Katie on writing up the report and summarizing a lot of information!

16:09:06 From Julia Meier (she/her), staff to Everyone:

Link to the engagement report:
<https://www.portland.gov/transition/documents/future-districts-and-council-operations-public-comment-report-april-2024-0/download>

16:09:10 From Katie Gavares (they/them), staff to Everyone:

Thank you, Lory.

16:15:56 From Katie Gavares (they/them), staff to Everyone:

Kate.gavares@portlandoregon.gov

Government Transition Advisory Committee

16:21:34 From Zach Kearnl to Hosts and panelists:

Definitely agree with you, Juliet, about the community assumptions about in-district offices

16:21:36 From Julia Meier (she/her), staff to Everyone:

brb

16:24:17 From Amy Randel to Everyone:

My apologies, having computer/tech issues

16:30:33 From Juliet Hyams to Everyone:

Many consistent themes are evident.

16:39:30 From Lory Hefeale to Everyone:

AGree with Joe - I was a bit confused why this was up for discussion

16:39:41 From Amy Randel to Everyone:

Same

16:40:27 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Everyone:

agreed Terry, we can continue to provide recommendations with more information and research gathering

16:40:42 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Everyone:

these recommendations consider current budgeting info

16:42:48 From Lory Hefeale to Everyone:

agree with Joe. make it clear what has already been recommended

16:44:18 From Zach Kearnl to Everyone:

I would take the 2nd bullet over the 1st

16:44:44 From Lory Hefeale to Everyone:

or regular?

16:45:18 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Everyone:

consistent and regularly scheduled*

16:45:53 From Zach Kearnl to Everyone:

Government Transition Advisory Committee

Routine

16:47:06 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Everyone:

call em out, set standards

16:49:05 From Juliet Hyams to Everyone:

I agree with Destiny and Jose.

16:54:24 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Everyone:

and ongoing budgets

16:55:42 From Terry Harris to Everyone:

Amy R -- I think it's both.

16:59:40 From Jose Gamero-Georgeson to Everyone:

one sec brb

16:59:56 From Zach Kearn to Everyone:

@Juanita I could also see a world where we make a recommendation/sharing of notes about what permanent in-district offices look like for the new council to decide on

17:01:30 From Zach Kearn to Everyone:

I would agree with Joe about the first sub-bullet

17:01:43 From Juanita Santana to Everyone:

Thanks Zack. I agree there is time to make more recommendations.

17:01:55 From Tate White to Hosts and panelists:

Some feedback we received from a City Attorney: in the past the general communications were not limited and the city attorney shared that councilors pay better attention now that it's limited. For your consideration.

17:05:48 From Terry Harris to Everyone:

The other input from a listening session was that these slots are reserved weeks in advance

17:08:42 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Everyone:

those are real practice suggestions we could recommend

Government Transition Advisory Committee

17:16:42 From Juliet Hyams to Everyone:

brb

17:18:37 From Zach Kearl to Everyone:

I think the standing committees is on the next slide

17:19:47 From Tate White to Hosts and panelists:

FYI: The mayor or a designee makes nominations to advisory board and committees (per charter). Those nominations are subject to council confirmation (of 7) but that would need to go to the full council, not a committee.

17:22:55 From Diana Shippet to Everyone:

The amended City Code Chapter 3.02, which goes into effect January 1 already states, "A committee generally consists of four to six Councilors, with at least one Councilor but no more than two from each district. A quorum is a majority of committee members.", which makes the bullet around number of members slightly duplicative.

17:24:50 From Jose Gamero-Georgeson to Everyone:

Thank you, Diana

17:25:19 From Amy Randel to Everyone:

Thank you Diana, important to know

17:25:34 From Zach Kearl to Everyone:

I'll disagree with you on that one, Terry. I think the Council should not be involved in confirming deputies

17:28:09 From Joe Hertzberg to Everyone:

I agree with Zach. It's the distinction between policy and execution.

17:30:49 From Terry Harris to Everyone:

the disciplines could be assigned to the committee of the whole

17:30:57 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Hosts and panelists:

Maybe combine "Ensure diverse perspectives & lives experience are represented" line to the "Ensure appropriate resources, including access to subject-matter experts and those directly impacted by the issues"

17:32:52 From Zach Kearl to Everyone:

Government Transition Advisory Committee

Sorry everyone. I have to drop off early to join another meeting. Thank you all for a good conversation

17:34:14 From Julia Meier (she/her), staff to Everyone:

I would propose we draft recommendations that state reasons for six standing committees and note the reasons for the disciplines to be a committee.

17:37:22 From Terry Harris to Everyone:

Destiny -- I think it's more like the committees do not necessarily need to align with service areas

17:38:14 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Hosts and panelists:

Okay thanks Terry, that could be confusing because these committees obviously connect to service areas! I'm wondering if that could be reworded or omitted?

17:39:09 From Destiny Magana-Pablo to Hosts and panelists:

wrap around service approach

17:39:23 From Jose Gamero-Georgeson to Everyone:

I think the first bullet point is potentially the same system I mentioned should be developed for public comment at meetings

17:40:01 From Lory Hefele to Everyone:

I think the second sentence on the third bullet should stand alone

17:43:29 From Lory Hefele to Everyone:

I'm sorry but I need to leave at 5:45

17:49:07 From Joe Hertzberg to Everyone:

Juliet & Jose: Well-run meeting. We covered a lot of ground and a lot of opinions.

Question and Answers

No questions asked using the Q&A function at this meeting.